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New York

President:	Mr. Wittig	(Germany)
Members:	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	Colombia	Mr. Aizate
	France	Mr. Bonne
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	India	Mr. Manjeev Singh Puri
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	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Portugal	Mr. Moraes Cabral
	Russian Federation	Mr. Pankin
	South Africa	Mr. Sangqu
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Tatham
	United States of America	Mrs. DiCarlo

Agenda

United Nations peacekeeping operations

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The meeting was called to order at 11.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

United Nations peacekeeping operations

The President: In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Alain Le Roy, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations; Lieutenant General Patrick Nyamvumba, Force Commander of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur; Lieutenant General Chander Prakash, Force Commander of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Major General Alberto Asarta Cuevas, Force Commander and Head of Mission of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon; and Major General Muhammad Khalid, Force Commander of the United Nations Mission in Liberia to participate in this meeting.

I would also like to warmly welcome the other Force Commanders and Chief Military Observers present with us today.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I give the floor to Mr. Le Roy.

Mr. Le Roy: We are grateful to you, Mr. President, for giving all our heads of mission the opportunity to appear before the Council. Four of them will speak. The first, Lieutenant General Nyamvumba, will speak on the issue of the protection of civilians in a non-permissive environment. Lieutenant General Prakash of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo will speak on the impact of the conditionality policy on the operation. Major General Asarta Cuevas of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon will speak on safety concerns in south Lebanon and their impact on daily operations. Major General Khalid of the United Nations Mission in Liberia will speak on the role of military components in early peacebuilding.

The President: I now give the floor to Lieutenant General Nyamvumba.

Lieutenant General Nyamvumba: I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for allowing me to address the Security Council on the protection of civilians in a non-permissive environment. Today, I will discuss issues of the operational environment, experience and strategic approach and efforts of the African Union-United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) in implementing its mandate vis-à-vis the protection of civilians. I will first briefly talk about Darfur's non-permissive environment and UNAMID's protection of civilians strategy. I will then discuss the efforts UNAMID has made to provide protection to civilians. Finally, I will talk about the challenges of the issue under discussion.

Let me begin with the operational environment of Darfur. Suffice it to say that the environment across the length and breadth of Darfur is indeed non-permissive. It is a large area with harsh climatic conditions, a lack of adequate roads and infrastructure, and limited local resources. Darfur is huge and mostly without minimum infrastructure facilities, which creates considerable barriers to reaching populations at risk and in need. The poor state of the roads often delays movement and restricts operational activities, especially during the rainy season, from June to October.

Besides this, the non-permissive environment for the protection of civilians in Darfur is also a result of localized armed clashes between the Government of the Sudan and belligerent groups, as well as localized tribal conflicts and clashes, usually over natural resources. Other factors include organized banditry, the widespread availability of small arms, sexual violence, child recruitment, and arbitrary arrests and detention.

In some areas, we have seen that due to the localized fighting between the Government of the Sudan and armed groups, UNAMID's movements, both on land and in the air, have sometimes been restricted by warring factions that unquestionably impede our efforts to protect civilians. Additionally, in the absence of any definite peace agreement or ceasefire between all the belligerents in Darfur, the conflict continues, resulting in the Government of the Sudan and the armed groups again restricting access to those areas; in an insecure environment for humanitarian components; and in the further suffering of the inhabitants. With diverse interest groups and stakeholders involved, the security situation remains volatile, and inter-factional or tribal conflicts continue to occur between all these warring parties.

Ultimately, the protection of the people of Darfur is dependent on the readiness and capacity of the Government of the Sudan to carry out its sovereign responsibility to protect its citizens. Accordingly, UNAMID's protection strategy, inter alia, identifies specific objectives and tasks to engage with and assist the Government of the Sudan in fulfilling its protection responsibilities in accordance with international human rights law. Our protection strategy at UNAMID is based on UNAMID's protection of civilians mandate, as issued under resolutions 1769 (2007), 1828 (2008) and 1935 (2010), and the communiqué of the seventy-ninth meeting of the African Union Peace and Security Council. The mandated tasks are to protect civilians across Darfur and to ensure safe, timely and unhindered humanitarian access, the safety and security of humanitarian personnel and the protection of humanitarian convoys.

UNAMID's protection of civilians strategy was prepared in full consultation with the United Nations country team. It is both built on and helps to guide the UNAMID/United Nations country team's integrated strategic framework; the United Nations Sudan humanitarian work plan; the UNAMID protection of civilians mission directive; the UNAMID Force Commander's directive; and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Services operational concept on the protection of civilians in United Nations peacekeeping operations. In keeping with its strategic roles and responsibilities, UNAMID has developed a situational awareness and early warning system. It also monitors, reports and evaluates incidents and conducts operational planning and implementation, coordination, communications and public information.

In the light of its mandate, and based on analysis of the protection environment in Darfur, the UNAMID strategy outlines four main objectives, which are, first, to ensure the fulfilment by the Government, armed groups and other non-State actors of their responsibility to protect civilians, in accordance with international human rights and humanitarian law; secondly, to protect civilians from physical acts of violence; thirdly, to ensure freedom of access to the populations at risk; and lastly, to prevent violations of human rights and ensure effective response, particularly with regard to women and children.

I shall now turn more specifically to our activities with regard to the protection of civilians. Despite the many obstacles in our operational environment, UNAMID has been relentless in its efforts to launch several initiatives aimed at improving its protection of civilians. We have maintained a more robust presence throughout Darfur, particularly in areas where fighting has affected civilian communities. We have improved the Mission's early warning and early response mechanism by issuing weekly analytical protection of civilian reports, in addition to conducting weekly civil-military coordination meetings.

We have significantly increased our patrol activities to include robust patrolling in various villages by day and night; protecting internally displaced person (IDP) camps; protecting marketplaces; assisting disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes; and providing humanitarian, logistics and administrative escorts. UNAMID's military, along with other components of the Mission, has already established a broader footprint across Darfur. In 2010, UNAMID's military conducted a total of 33,963 patrols; by contrast, in the first six months of 2011, the number has already reached 23,554. This is clearly a marked improvement, which signals our increased effort to protect innocent civilians. UNAMID has been able to assist in stabilizing team sites in Shangil Tobaya, Khor Abeche, Hamidiya, Hassa Hissa and Kalma camps.

UNAMID has facilitated access for humanitarian actors to deliver assistance, including in Jebel Marra and Jebel Moon. In the case of Jebel Marra, we are actively seeking to establish a temporary operating base in Feina as a humanitarian hub for outreach to other locations in the area. In all of these areas, there has been a significant improvement in the security situation, and as a result significant numbers of IDPs — approximately 1,500 per month since January — have started returning to their homes. We have assisted in the movement of families within Sector North and the resettlement of returnees from Chad in Sector West. The Mission has been involved in settling disputes over farms and water among nomads, and tribal clashes.

In May and June, UNAMID, in collaboration with the humanitarian country team, initiated efforts to reach out and deliver relief assistance to areas that had not been accessed before.

The quick-impact projects have also provided dividends in terms of delivering on various needs of

the populations. The exercise code-named Operation Spring Basket has been conceptualized within the framework of the UNAMID strategy on the protection of civilians as a means of improving the delivery of humanitarian relief through the expansion of access to hard-to-reach areas and to more people in need.

Following the negotiations held with the Government of the Sudan and the armed movements, Operation Spring Basket commenced on 1 May with a total of nine assessment missions, completed during the months of May and June 2011. The missions have been able to deliver a limited supply of vaccinations for women and children, as well as educational and shelter materials for a girls' school in Northern Darfur.

Protection is indeed a joint effort by UNAMID and the humanitarian community. However, that community is culturally independent and has its own schedule and priorities, and at times it is not comfortable delivering aid with the military involved. Organizationally, while the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is charged with coordination, it has no authority, incentives or penalties to increase participation by the United Nations family or non-governmental organizations.

UNAMID has provided escorts as well as corridors for the delivery of humanitarian services, including those related to food, water, hygiene, vaccination and shelter. Some of those activities have succeeded in curtailing maternal deaths and reducing the infant mortality rate. The HIV/AIDS Unit is also working with the UNAMID military, police and civilian components to build the capacity of mission personnel on matters related to the integration of HIV/AIDS into their various activities. Since January 2011, the UNAMID HIV/AIDS Unit has provided valuable services to more than 1,000 ex-combatants demobilized in different parts of Darfur. The third phase, planned for July and August 2011, is expected to continue with a stronger and larger focus on the actual delivery of humanitarian relief.

Our efforts with regard to the protection of civilians also face different challenges. The first and foremost is that in the absence of a comprehensive, inclusive and legitimate ceasefire by all armed movements, the security of civilians remains a major concern. It is to be noted that on many occasions UNAMID has been prevented from having access to certain areas because of fighting, which continues to create challenges for the protection of civilians. Other challenges include the fact that peacekeepers have also been targeted, with seven of them killed in 2010 and 2011.

Finally, poor training and ill-equipped troop-contributing countries have been identified as one of the major setbacks affecting efficiency concerning the protection of civilians in Darfur. It is indeed unfortunate that, in spite of deliberate orders, some troop-contributing countries have failed to act in accordance with the training focus for the Mission mandate.

I have provided here a flavour of the strategies on the protection of civilians and the guidelines of UNAMID and have outlined the realities on ground. Against that backdrop, I have highlighted our efforts and activities aimed at improving human lives. Protection of civilians in Darfur is definitely a demanding and arduous job. However, our determination and efforts will be sustained. We shall continuously strive to overcome the challenges by whatever means are available to us, and we shall continue to count on the support of the Security Council.

The President: I thank Lieutenant-General Nyamvumba for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Lieutenant-General Chander Prakash.

Lieutenant-General Prakash: It is an honour for me, as Force Commander of one of the largest United Nations peacekeeping missions — the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) — to be given an opportunity to address the Council this morning on the conditionality policy and its impact on operations.

The policy has been in operation in MONUSCO for just over 18 months, and we now have a reasonably good feel for what it can do and the associated issues. These I will elaborate on a little later, but before doing so, it might be helpful if I started by talking about what the policy actually entails and how it is being implemented by MONUSCO.

Protection of civilians in support of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains the primary focus of our work. Among the other tasks with which the Mission is charged, we are mandated to support the efforts of the Government in

bringing ongoing military operations against the Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR), the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and other armed groups to a completion, specifically by supporting the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC) through jointly planned operations. But, as stated in resolution 1925 (2010) and carried through its current mandate — resolution 1991 (2011) — MONUSCO support for the FARDC is strictly conditioned on compliance by the FARDC with international humanitarian and human rights law, and refugee law. This caveat is what is now referred to as the conditionality policy, and it governs the way in which the Mission approaches the task of supporting the FARDC and other Congolese authorities.

The policy has been translated into a detailed mission standing operating procedure, setting out very clear requirements that need to be met in order for support to the FARDC to be provided. The nature of the support includes primarily fuel, rations, transportation, fire support, expert advice and casualty evacuation. Certain ongoing FARDC actions against the armed groups, such as Operation Amani Leo and Operation Iron Stone, inter alia, are being carried out with considerable support from MONUSCO. That support is conditional on there being sufficient joint planning of operations, particularly with respect to protection of civilians. Support is limited to units and commanders with acceptable human rights records. Implicit is the requirement for adequate screening of key personnel and visibility of FARDC actions in the field. Support is denied at the planning stage to units or commanders believed to have committed grave human rights violations, including mass rapes and the employment of child soldiers.

In this regard, a thorough screening process is in place. Even after the support is provided, if at some stage non-compliance with the conditionality policy comes to light, support can be withdrawn after due notification to the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and if they then fail to take appropriate action, as was the case when serious human rights violations were committed by one of the battalions recently. The standard operating procedure remains the subject of fine-tuning.

The implementation of the conditionality policy is regularly reviewed by the senior management group, in consultation with representatives of the humanitarian community, including the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. The impact of the conditionality policy is now visible.

There are, of course, some positives. In certain areas, the policy has had a positive impact on the conduct of operations by the FARDC. It has brought the MONUSCO Force and FARDC closer to jointly planning operations and developing operational concepts that are applicable to the unique conditions that prevail in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Both sides have learned from each other, and, as a result, operations have become much more sophisticated in their design and implementation. Importantly, protection of civilians has been factored in at the start of the planning process, as inputs are sought from a large number of stakeholders, including the Joint Human Rights Office within the Mission. The Mission's efforts and those of the FARDC are now much better coordinated, with obvious benefits in terms of what can be achieved on the ground. The requirement for MONUSCO is to closely scrutinize the distribution of logistics support, which has its obvious operational benefits. It has helped to ensure that our support gets to the troops in the field as intended, to ensure that they are properly fed and sustained, thereby contributing to individual morale and motivation.

The very existence of the conditionality policy, as well as President Kabila's "zero-tolerance" policy, has reminded Commanders of their personal responsibilities in exercising effective command and control over their own troops in operations. For their own sake, as well as for that of the unit, they have had to pay more attention to what is being done by the troops in their name.

By and large, the recent behaviour of MONUSCO-supported FARDC units has been satisfactory, and the conduct of most joint operations has not been impacted by adverse publicity. In an army made up of professionals, ex-rebels and Mayi-Mayis, which has attracted criticism for preying off the local population, we now have started seeing encouraging signs of improvement in personal discipline and human values.

There are certain issues. Despite certain obvious benefits, the policy presents certain issues and challenges for the Mission. The limited resources available to the Mission to implement the conditionality policy, in addition to other commitments, means that there is a restriction on the

number of FARDC units that it can support. At a certain point in time, we run out of military observers and contingents to carry out the monitoring functions. We also run out of civilian staff to conduct the necessary screening checks. In addition to this, experience has shown there are many commanders who do not meet the criteria. So, one of the consequences of our own conditionality policy is that our capacity to reach and influence all parts of the FARDC order of battle is not as great as we would want it to be.

That having been said, even if we had sufficient resources we would still find ourselves in the situation where there is no longer a strong appetite within the FARDC for conducting joint operations, particularly in the Kivus. They argue, with some vindication, that operational surprise and security are lost due to the protracted preparations and wide consultation. The trend is therefore away from joint operations towards unilateral FARDC operations, over which the Mission has limited oversight or influence.

It is a fact that we have been breaking new ground with the introduction of a conditionality policy. We had nothing to fall back on in terms of tried and tested guidance for implementing the policy. Only as time has passed have we become more confident about the best ways of operationalizing the policy. There have been stresses and strains along the way, including with our FARDC partners, who have complained about inadequate consultation and engagement, particularly in the early days when considering withdrawal of support to offending units. Requests for changes of commanders have aroused feelings of intrusion into areas of national sovereignty.

Our own troops have also faced the dilemma of trying to work out where to place priority — monitoring supported FARDC or countering anti-Government forces? This has not been easy, particularly for junior field commanders, who are trained more to deal with clarity than ambiguity. Who is on which side? When should they act, and how? Conditionality has certainly added to the burden on such officers and made the operational landscape more blurred and challenging.

Let me make some recommendations. Having sketched out some of the ways in which the conditionality policy can impact on operations, I would now like to make a few suggestions on how it might be enhanced for future missions. First and foremost, the conditionality policy cannot stand on its own for long-term gains; it must be simultaneously followed up and supported by broader military reforms, such as proper integration, and security sector reform.

Secondly, while it is desirable to make the screening system broad and deep, apart from being resource-intensive, it tends to reduce the number of commanders and units available for operations that can be supported by MONUSCO. The extent to which the exercise is undertaken needs to be looked at again. We need to find a balance between what is desirable and what is feasible, in order for the policy not to become so invasive that it conflicts with the achievement of our overall mandate.

Thirdly, where possible we should seek to introduce this policy at mission start-up rather than further downstream. It is easier to implement when everything else is new, and the impact could potentially be much greater.

To conclude, conditionality policy has had both positive and negative impacts on operations. There are certain broader issues and human values at stake. To my mind, this policy is there to stay, but there is scope for further development and refinement. If the policy were seen as jointly owned by our national partners, this would be of great help. While it would still be a vehicle for safeguarding the United Nations image and reputation, it could also create an opening for the host nation to influence and take informed decisions on what and who is supported.

The President: I thank Lieutenant General Prakash for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Major General Alberto Asarta Cuevas. Let me take this opportunity to reiterate the Council's strong condemnation of the attacks perpetrated against the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon yesterday in Saida and to convey through him our condolences to the injured and their families.

Major General Asarta Cuevas: I thank you very much, Sir, for your kind words and for giving me the opportunity to address the Council today.

Last week, the Council met to discuss the latest report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) (S/2011/406). I know that the Council was briefed by Special Coordinator Williams and the Department for Peacekeeping Operations.

Today, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight one of my main concerns in southern Lebanon: the issue of safety and security and its impact on the operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). I will then also touch on the broader issue of the status of the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) and the focus for the coming period to ensure further progress in its overall implementation.

On the whole, southern Lebanon and northern Israel have enjoyed the five quietest and calmest years in many decades. The situation in UNIFIL's area of operations also remained relatively stable during the first half of 2011, when the political situation in the country was at an impasse. Nevertheless, in recent months, UNIFIL has experienced a series of events that reflected the range of threats that the Mission is exposed to and that affect the security situation.

Yesterday, at around 6 p.m. local time, an explosion targeted a UNIFIL convoy along the coastal road near the town of Saida, which is outside UNIFIL's area of operations. According to preliminary information, the attack injured six UNIFIL peacekeepers. Three of them were transported with minor injuries to hospital for treatment, where their condition is said to be stable. They will be repatriated today to France. UNIFIL forensic experts are coordinating closely with the Lebanese Armed Forces to determine the circumstances surrounding the incident. This was the fifth attack against UNIFIL since the adoption of resolution 1701 (2006).

Council members will also be aware of the attack against a UNIFIL convoy that occurred on 27 May on the highway to Beirut, when a remote-controlled roadside bomb exploded, injuring six Italian peacekeepers. Two were seriously wounded, while four suffered light to moderate injuries. In addition, two Lebanese civilians sustained minor injuries. This was the first attack in more than three years. No one has claimed responsibility for the attack.

The Lebanese authorities and UNIFIL immediately launched an investigation, as have the Italian authorities. These investigations are still ongoing. The attack was condemned by all senior political leaders across the political spectrum. The cooperation with the Lebanese authorities in conducting the investigation and in instituting additional risk-mitigation measures, such as Lebanese Army escorts, has been good. In addition, I, as the designated official for security in south Lebanon, undertook to reduce the risk of a similar attack by adopting additional protection measures, including for military convoys and other movements inside and outside the UNIFIL area of operations, and for enhanced force protection. Nevertheless, it is impossible to completely prevent such terrorist attacks.

On 15 May — and this is also covered in the Secretary-General's report — a large demonstration took place on the occasion of what the Palestinians commemorate as Nakba Day. I will not repeat in detail the sequence of the tragic events that, according to the information provided to UNIFIL by Lebanese authorities, resulted in 7 persons being killed and more than 100 injured. We have discussed our preliminary findings on the events with the parties and, having sent the UNIFIL investigation report to them, will do so in more detail at the next tripartite meeting, planned for August.

UNIFIL has also conveyed to the parties its recommendations for preventing such incidents in the future. Specifically, the Lebanese authorities should carry out a full assessment of all security and other risks of violations of resolution 1701 (2006) and of measures required to maintain law and order before authorizing any demonstration in the vicinity of the Blue Line. The Lebanese Army did not authorize demonstrations in the vicinity of the Blue Line during the Naksa period in early June, thereby preventing a repetition of such violence. These measures have indeed proven to be effective, and they demonstrate yet again the resolve and determination of the Lebanese Armed Forces and the people of southern Lebanon to work towards lasting peace and stability in the south.

Finally, throughout the month of June, the Mission experienced a number of incidents of unfriendly behaviour by individuals or groups of individuals towards UNIFIL patrols and restricted freedom of movement of UNIFIL. These incidents do give me real cause for concern.

In many instances, the Lebanese side cites a perceived infringement of the individual's or local community's privacy by the UNIFIL troops taking photos or inadvertently entering private property as the reason for the unfriendly behaviour towards our troops. However, not all such situations can be explained in this way, and we cannot exclude that there may also be

instances when the population may be encouraged to act in this way in an attempt to discourage UNIFIL from carrying out its activities and thereby fulfilling its mandate throughout the area of operations.

How has UNIFIL reacted to these events? We have increased force protection and risk-mitigating measures, which often means that more personnel are required to carry out the same activities. We also conduct more operational activities, together with the Lebanese Armed Forces to the extent that the capacity of the Lebanese Army allows but without limiting the performance of UNIFIL in carrying out activities, especially those we consider essential. The Council can rest assured that neither terrorist attacks nor unfriendly encounters with the population will deter UNIFIL from carrying out its mandate. We continue to do so with the same resolve as ever.

At this point, I would also like to convey to the Council how greatly the Mission has benefited from the unwavering support it has received over the years from the Council, as expressed most strongly in resolution 1773 (2007). On the basis of that resolution, UNIFIL regularly reminds the parties of their responsibilities to scrupulously respect the safety and security of United Nations personnel and the freedom of movement of UNIFIL and reiterates with Lebanese interlocutors the Council's call for closer cooperation between UNIFIL and the Lebanese Army.

Despite the security challenges I spoke about earlier, the security situation in the south, as I mentioned before, remains generally relatively stable, and south Lebanon has enjoyed the five quietest and calmest years in many decades. This is in many ways the result of the close cooperation between UNIFIL and the Lebanese Army, which helped establish a new strategic environment in southern Lebanon.

Almost five years since the adoption of resolution 1701 (2006), it is an appropriate moment to look again at the main objectives of the resolution and how we need to proceed in order to achieve them.

Resolution 1701 (2006) called for a full cessation of hostilities. It also called for Israel and Lebanon to support a permanent ceasefire and a long-term solution of the conflict based, inter alia, on full respect for the Blue Line by both parties and security arrangements to prevent the resumption of hostilities, including the establishment between the Blue Line and the Litani River of an area free of any armed personnel, assets and weapons other than those of the Government Lebanon and of UNIFIL.

In addition to carrying out its military operati activities, UNIFIL established the tripartite forum which it discusses with senior representatives of Israel Defense Forces and the Lebanese Armed Fo violations of resolution 1701 (2006), mili operational issues and confidence-building meas between the two sides. The tripartite forum developed into a key mechanism for liaison coordination between the parties, and both parties h committed themselves to it and use it actively. forum continues to play a critical role in advancing Blue Line marking process, in finding practi solutions to contentious issues and thereby in defus tensions and preventing the escalation of incidents areas along the Blue Line.

The Lebanese Armed Forces are a strate partner for UNIFIL in maintaining the new strate environment in south Lebanon and in implementi resolution 1701 (2006). The joint Department Peacekeeping Operations-UNIFIL technical revie which was completed at the beginning of 20 therefore recommended that a regular strateg dialogue mechanism between UNIFIL and t Lebanese Armed Forces be set up. The Lebane authorities — Government and Army — welcomed th recommendation, and the mechanism has be established and has taken up its work.

The process will assist the Lebanese Arm Forces in establishing appropriate operation capabilities for implementing tasks mandated resolution 1701 (2006) and will eventually facilita the gradual handover of responsibility to the Lebane Armed Forces. The strategic dialogue mechanism wi proceed on the basis of analyses of the UNIFIL ar Lebanese Army ground forces and maritime assets ar will set a series of benchmarks reflecting th correlation between the capacity and responsibilities UNIFIL vis-à-vis the capacity and responsibilities the Lebanese Armed Forces.

With the tripartite forum and the strategi dialogue mechanism, UNIFIL is in a good position t advance the military operational issues mandated to i in resolution 1701 (2006). The successfu implementation of these processes will, hopefully ensure that the situation in south Lebanon and along

the Blue Line will remain calm and that the cessation of hostilities between the parties will be maintained.

Essentially, that would ensure maintaining the status quo of relative calm, but in a precariously fragile environment. However, I believe we — the United Nations, UNIFIL, the Security Council and the international community — should not be satisfied with maintaining this status quo. Rather, the calm and relative stability that UNIFIL and the Lebanese Army and the Israel Defense Forces have established and maintained across the Blue Line provide a window of opportunity for a political process to address the issues, which are beyond the remit of a peacekeeping mission such as UNIFIL can support a political process by ensuring a conducive security situation, but it cannot replace a political, diplomatic process.

I therefore believe it is necessary to refocus all our efforts on achieving the main objectives of resolution 1701 (2006), namely, a permanent ceasefire and a long-term solution to the conflict.

UNIFIL enjoys the support of the population in the south, and the Lebanese national consensus on resolution 1701 (2006) has been maintained. The ministerial statement of the new Government reiterates Lebanon's strong commitment to resolution 1701 (2006) and to UNIFIL's mandate. At the most recent tripartite meeting, on 13 July, the head of the Lebanese delegation confirmed that there has been no change in the orders to the Lebanese Armed Forces with respect to implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) and cooperation with UNIFIL.

While the new Government's period in office has been short, UNIFIL has noted that the Government and the Army are acting in that spirit. This was confirmed by Prime Minister Mikati in his first visit to south Lebanon, on 16 July, which included a symbolic visit to UNIFIL headquarters, constituting a strong statement of support for our Mission.

The Government of Israel also remains committed to the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006). Since the adoption of the resolution, UNIFIL has enjoyed the unanimous support of the Security Council for its operation in south Lebanon. That support remains of vital importance in order for UNIFIL to be in a strong position to continue to carry out its mandate.

These are key factors for continued success in the implementation of UNIFIL's mandate. At the same time, however, UNIFIL's success in eventually handing over responsibilities to the Lebanese Army and drawing down its own forces will ultimately depend on a political process to resolve the issues underlying the conflict. UNIFIL is providing a window of opportunity that should be seized in order to make progress towards achieving the main objectives of resolution 1701 (2006), which I reiterate, namely, the establishment of a permanent ceasefire and a long-term solution of the conflict.

Very soon the Council will discuss the extension of UNIFIL's mandate. As Head of Mission and Force Commander of UNIFIL, I would highly appreciate the continued support of the Security Council and in particular its express support for the safety and freedom of movement of UNIFIL personnel, as well as the objectives of the strategic dialogue process.

The President: I thank Major General Asarta Cuevas for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Major General Muhammad Khalid.

Major General Khalid: As the Force Commander of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), I feel honoured to have been mandated to share in this forum my thoughts and experiences on the role of the military component in early peacebuilding. I will deal with the subject by first underlining the peacebuilding process so as to ascertain the space available for application of the military instrument. Then I will outline its role in early peacebuilding and how it can be achieved. At the end, I will highlight certain areas that I feel would need attention before mandating the deployment of the military component.

Post-conflict societies are characterized by non-existent or very weak security mechanisms — armies in shambles, disorganized paramilitary forces under little or no control, abundant arms and ammunition in private and Government possession, and lack of trust in and legitimacy of Government control over police and military forces. Against such a backdrop, peacekeeping troops attempt to support the transition of wartime security tasks and the political and economic system by providing a peaceful and secure environment for a sustainable and durable peace process.

Since the cold war era, the concept of peacekeeping has been entirely transformed. The military component, apart from providing a safe and secure environment and monitoring ceasefires between opposing parties, carries out a host of other activities that fall under the purview of peacebuilding. That entails all actions to identify and support structures that will tend to strengthen peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict.

Let me add that the peacebuilding process is multidimensional, intricate and specialized in nature. It is not necessarily the domain of the military but rather is the specialized job of experts in this field. It involves the process of and activities in resolving violent conflicts and establishing sustainable peace. It focuses on national capacity-building, which takes place in collaboration with political, operational and tactical fronts at national and subnational levels.

Normally, the military component is first to be deployed in any conflict-ridden area, as other set-ups take more time due to certain procedural delays and the non-conducive environment.

The military component, by virtue of its organizational strength, can absorb and facilitate other components, besides undertaking a variety of roles to minimize the miseries of the inhabitants of a conflict zone. It also facilitates a jump start to the peacebuilding process before other United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations arrive and get established.

Likely roles of the military component in the early peacebuilding process may include providing a safe and secure environment, combating organized crime, policing tasks and support to police in cases of mass unrest, engineering tasks to restore infrastructure to facilitate humanitarian relief efforts and initiate certain quick-impact projects, medical outreach and epidemic control, handling and management of refugees, assisting security sector reform and capacity-building of national armed forces and police, and a broad range of logistics and other support to United Nations agencies and other partners engaged in peacebuilding activities, including transport, airlift and communications. In most phases, the military can provide a secure and conducive environment in which to recommence the political process through elections or referendums or perhaps both.

For such a comprehensive process to proceed, an enabling environment must be created. This is where the role of the military component, as an enabler in the early stages of the peacebuilding process, can play out.

Providing a security umbrella to various organs and functionaries of the international body is the most important function of the military. That is achieved through observer missions for the implementation and enforcement of peace agreements with a view to help build confidence in the early phase, brought about through good offices and impartial monitoring of commitments endorsed by the parties. The commitments may include ceasefires, border engagements, agreed divisions of power or assets, peace negotiations, peace or ceasefire enforcement, and restoration of law and order. They may also include disarmament, demobilization and reintegration as per agreed terms, demining activities, unexploded ordnance disposal, removal of explosives and booby traps for the safety of peacekeepers and the local population and other United Nations agencies, and escort, patrol and security tasks, thereby enhancing peacebuilders' freedom of movement and operations.

This is in brief the context and the role where, I believe, the military component fits in. However, if military intervention is contemplated, the need for a post-intervention strategy is also of paramount importance. The objective of such a strategy must be to help ensure that the conditions that prompted military intervention do not repeat themselves or simply resurface.

Before employing military instruments to resolve problems in the post-conflict scenario, certain essential aspects must be kept in mind in order to accrue the desired dividends.

First, a comprehensive approach is the only way in which military interventions as peacebuilders can achieve success. The military must not be used as a substitute for political engagement in the context of a peacebuilding problem.

Secondly, correlation of ends and means is extremely important. If the military is to be deployed, it should be deployed with adequate strength at the early stages and drawn down thereafter, not vice versa.

Last but not least, the military presence tends to create a culture of dependence among the host population, which can hinder national reconstruction

and human resource development. Such tendencies must be guarded against, and capacity-building in the host country must remain a priority.

To conclude, I would say that the role of military components in the early stages of the peacebuilding process is inescapable and crucial. The military components play two main roles in the early peacebuilding process.

First, the military component provides a secure and safe environment for other internal and external actors to operate. Secondly, the military makes its resources available for the attainment of the mission's overall objective, over and above its security functions, during the stabilization, transition and consolidation phases of the peacebuilding process. Being the first component to be deployed, the military component starts the peacebuilding, directly or indirectly, right from Day One and provides a launchpad from which other peacebuilding forces will be unleashed for systematic initiation of a comprehensive process.

The President: I will now turn to Council members. I remind colleagues to be mindful of the lateness of the hour when speaking.

Mrs. Ogwu (Nigeria): My first words must be to express appreciation to Under-Secretary-General Le Roy for the guidance he has provided for this debate, particular in organizing the Force Commanders. I want to warmly welcome the presence of the Force Commanders in the Council. The clarity and incisiveness of their perspectives on the issues under consideration bear out the wisdom and importance of this interaction, which aims to foster greater synergy between the field and the Security Council. Let me commend them especially for their immeasurable sacrifices in leading the various peace missions.

Since our last engagement with Force Commanders, in August 2010 (6370th meeting), there have been several important developments throughout the United Nations system toward making our peacekeeping efforts more effective. We have seen a more purposeful implementation of peace agreements and maintenance of ceasefires. We have established two new peacekeeping missions — the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) and, following the closure of UNMIS, the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA).

However, major challenges remain in such critical areas as civilian protection, bridging the gaps in capacity in human and material resources, and capping troop casualties. The topics under consideration this morning are therefore apt and responsive to trends in contemporary peacekeeping discourse.

My point of departure this morning will be the key issue of the conditionality policy of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) examined by General Prakash.

We share his assessment and views, and we remain convinced that it is prima facie counterproductive for MONUSCO to provide support to or carry out joint operations with the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC) where the latter has known human rights violators in strategic and command positions. Indeed, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Roger Meece, once noted, "the conditionality policy has resulted in the removal of some of such FARDC commanders involved in the perpetration of crimes against civilians in the regions where MONUSCO has a strong presence".

To strengthen such positive assessments, the conditionality policy must be adequately complemented by sustained efforts to build the capacity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to maintain internal security through disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration — and, of course, security sector reform. With structural fragmentation, absence of clear command and control, operational weakness and improper discipline, FARDC is often unable to effectively provide protection for civilians. In debating the conditionality policy, therefore, my delegation prefers a strategic alliance between MONUSCO and FARDC that will complement the capacity of FARDC, retain MONUSCO's relative oversight and ultimately boost the operational effectiveness of the Force.

The primary expectation of civilians in the communities where peacekeepers deploy is that they will be afforded appropriate protection. Protection of civilians is therefore at the heart of the mandate of most United Nations peacekeeping missions, including the African Union-United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

With reports of aerial bombardments, artillery shelling and heavy fighting between the Sudanese armed forces and armed movements, particularly in the areas of Shangil Tobaya in Northern Darfur and Djebil Mara in Western Darfur, deterring attacks on civilians remains a daunting challenge in Darfur. Although the primary responsibility to protect civilians rests with the Sudanese authorities, greater cooperation between the Government of the Sudan and UNAMID will undoubtedly ensure better protection of civilians.

My delegation commends UNAMID for employing a more robust posture to protect civilians and for increasing active patrolling in Western Darfur. In particular, we welcome its enhanced logistical support to humanitarian organizations and support for the child protection mainstreaming agenda.

Since the adoption of Council resolution 1701 (2006) and the deployment of troops of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), south Lebanon has gradually moved toward stability. The progress can be partly attributed to UNIFIL's close coordination with the Lebanese armed forces and the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). However, the security situation remains very fragile. The deadly incident of 15 May along the Blue Line and the terrorist attacks on 27 May on six UNIFIL peacekeepers call for further reflection. Yesterday there was another attack on five peacekeepers at Sidon.

My delegation unequivocally condemns these attacks. We call on the parties — the Lebanese armed forces and the IDF — to fulfil their obligations under resolution 1701 (2006) to ensure the safety and security of UNIFIL personnel. Indeed, the parties must leverage the regular tripartite meetings convened by the UNIFIL Force Commander to strengthen confidence and reinvigorate hope in the UNIFIL forces.

United Nations peacekeeping is at a critical juncture. Meeting the demands for peacekeeping operations has stretched the Organization's capacity to the limits, exerting enormous pressure, enormous strain, on its peacekeeping efficiency. Our peacekeeping operations are increasingly multidimensional, requiring greater coordination and cooperation between the various constituents, including the military, civilian police and regional and other, informal, organizations. The challenges have been varied, ranging from preventing the appearance of conflicts to restoring peace when the conflicts eventually do appear.

Deploying troops with the necessary training, equipment and logistical support to effectively undertake the complex and potentially dangerous task faced by peacekeepers remains a key determinant of an operation's success. In that connection, my delegation reiterates that adequate emphasis be placed on the deployment of troops with the capacity to respond adequately to the cultural nuances in each field station. That, from our point of view, should also be a priority when considering inter-mission cooperation, as was recently seen in the United Nations Mission in Liberia and the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI).

The early resolution of peace across many of our missions is increasingly dependent on the work of civilian experts in key areas such as the rule of law, human rights and child protection. Recent developments in UNAMID and UNOCI lend further credence to the significance of building sustainable national capacities in these areas. In this regard, we encourage the Office of the Rule of Law and Security Institutions to coordinate its activities with relevant actors within and outside the United Nations, including the non-governmental organizations that inherently have the capacity to remain in the field well after the conclusion of a United Nations peacekeeping mission.

As we continue to confront the diverse challenges to peacekeeping, we must leverage the lessons learned from previous experiences. We can begin by identifying the issues that have most often held missions back from assuming their full range of capabilities. An effective early warning system can forestall conflict, limiting threats to international peace and security. Member States and regional bodies should seek more effective strategies to identify and address the deep-rooted causes of conflict within their countries and regions. That will ultimately help to ensure that when peace comes, it will be deeply rooted and sustainable.

I want to affirm that Nigeria remains fully committed to collective security, as enshrined in the United Nations Charter. While paying tribute to those who have paid the ultimate price in the line of duty so that others may live in peace, let us take this opportunity to renew our resolve as peacekeepers to

respecting and preserving the fundamentals of United Nations peacekeeping.

The President: Let me remind Council members that they have the opportunity here to address questions and comments not only to our briefers, but also beyond, to all Force Commanders present in the Chamber.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): I would like to start by paying special tribute to Mr. Alain le Roy. Faced with demanding and difficult tasks, he has done an extraordinary job. Brazil greatly appreciates his work in general, but I would like to make particular reference to his constant and very constructive interaction with troop-contributing countries, as well as the launch, along with Ms. Malcorra, of the New Horizon initiative. My Government thanks him for his service and wishes him well in his future endeavours.

I would like to join in welcoming the heads of military components to the Council, and to express my country's heartfelt appreciation for the excellent work that they are doing in very challenging circumstances. I thank the Force Commanders of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Nations Mission in Liberia for the reflections that they have shared with us today. Having troops and observers in most of those missions, Brazil knows first-hand the high quality of their leadership and commitment.

The briefings that we have heard today help us to gain a better understanding of how the decisions we take affect the situation on the ground. Here in New York, we must strive to ensure that we give peacekeepers the political guidance and support they need to carry out their mandates. However, we must also take care not to micromanage them or curb the space for the creative thinking of the mission leadership, which are just as crucial to success.

I wish to focus my remarks on the capability-driven approach to peacekeeping, proposed by the New Horizon initiative. We are right to demand results from mission leaders, but we must also give them the tools they need to do their job. On the whole, although important progress has been made, we should continue to strive to get the necessary skills and capacity onto the ground.

The military are usually the largest component of missions. For the local population, they are often the face of the mission. Therefore, it is important to ensure that they receive the necessary training in areas such as civil-military cooperation, cultural sensitivity, conduct and discipline. Peacekeepers will be more effective if they are capable of relating to the local population.

In the civilian area of peacekeeping, the harmonization of service conditions will have a significant long-term impact on a mission's ability to attract and retain civilian staff of the highest calibre. The civilian capacity review was a major contribution to our thinking on the issue. Discussions on implementing the recommendations should begin as soon as possible.

To achieve sustainable peace, the Council, the Secretariat, troop- and police-contributing countries and other stakeholders must all work together to give commanders on the ground the support they need. I wish to assure all the Force Commanders present here today that Brazil remains committed to that goal.

Mr. Alzate (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Our delegation would like to begin by thanking the presidency of the Council for organizing this meeting with the Force Commanders, to whom I pay special tribute. We would also like most especially to thank Mr. Le Roy, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for his participation in and guidance of this discussion's success.

My delegation values the important work undertaken by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Force Commanders, their staff and the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations, led by Ambassador Ogwu of Nigeria, who have made valuable contributions in that field.

One challenge that is the subject of ongoing interest is improving the synergy among the Secretariat, the Security Council and troop-contributing countries. We have made progress in that regard. At the same time, we would suggest that the Council continue enhancing that interaction, which we believe to be vital. Similarly, we underscore the progress made in developing doctrine and improving the operations of United Nations peacekeeping missions. The dynamic of operations in the field and the United Nations logistical capacity to ensure the security and well-being of staff on the ground are thereby improved.

With regard to the West Africa Coast Initiative to tackle international organized crime in that region, Columbia believes it very important to offer our experience in that area, having deployed national police units to work with Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone. We also have an active presence in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti.

One challenge facing us is improving the capacity to mobilize United Nations troops on the use of and doctrine of using rotary-wing aircraft, helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft. In that regard, we propose further analysis of logistical, human and technological capacities in order to optimize their results. We need to procure high-technology teams for peacekeeping operations, in particular in communications, intelligence and observation in the field, for early warning and forecasts of violence.

Finally, we recognize the need to prioritize the protection and defence of civilians by United Nations forces, just as we have prioritized upholding the principles and mandates enshrined in the Organization's Charter. Only thereby can we strengthen the relationship between the United Nations and the forces that represent it and the populations on the ground.

Mr. Moungara Moussotsi (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): Peacekeeping operations, which are one of the key functions of our Organization, have in recent demonstrated their utility and effectiveness in the maintenance of international peace and security. In that regard, I would like first and foremost to thank Mr. Le Roy and the Force Commanders for their briefings.

Gabon reiterates its great appreciation of the commitment and professionalism of the Force Commanders and the other peacekeepers who undertake difficult work, often in a very hostile environment and at times with limited resources. The enlightening briefings that we have just heard reflect the daily realities of all peacekeeping missions represented here and are viable indicators of the real difficulties facing peacekeeping operations. My delegation also appreciates receiving such information, which enables the Council better to take necessary decisions and adapt to evolving situations on the ground.

We commend the incorporation in the mandates of peacekeeping operations of new multidisciplinary approaches, such as the protection of civilians, strengthening the rule of law, the implementation of mechanisms to prevent the resurgence of conflict, and post-conflict peacebuilding. We therefore reiterate the need for the Council to give peacekeeping operations clear, credible and executable mandates tailored to the foreseen objectives and results, as well as the resources necessary to achieve all the tasks assigned to them.

With respect to peacebuilding, I welcome the progress achieved in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Liberia. In late 2011, those countries will hold major, decisive elections, which will be a litmus test for the missions there. Their success will determine the eventual configuration of withdrawals from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Liberia, and will thereby help us to elaborate strategies for transferring security functions to the respective Governments. In that respect, the Council must continue to closely track the situations being addressed by those two peacekeeping operations so that we can incorporate appropriate changes in their mandates, particularly in terms of logistical and operational capacities.

I should like to ask a question of the Force Commander of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. What is his assessment of the threat posed by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)? How does he envision cooperation among all the United Nations missions in the region, particularly with respect to fighting the LRA?

In conclusion, my country will continue to support the United Nations peacekeeping operations. We welcome interactive meetings such as today's with the Force Commanders in order to keep the Council abreast of developments in their missions on the ground and to report to us on the challenges they face.

Mr. Manjeev Singh Puri (India): I would like to thank the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Under-Secretary-General Alain Le Roy for having introduced the Force Commanders and for having given us this opportunity to hear directly from the people on the ground. I believe that this is particularly important since peacekeeping really is the main tool at the disposal of the Security Council, involves the largest percentage of the United Nations budget and is certainly the particular activity that occupies the maximum amount of time of the Council.

India has contributed more troops and police officers to peacekeeping operations than any other country. With more than 100,000 personnel in over 40 peacekeeping operations, we are very familiar with what all of this entails, what is possible and what peacekeeping operations are capable of. We have also engaged in the normative side of this particular debate, both in the Council and the General Assembly. A seminar was recently held in New Delhi in the tradition of that constructive engagement. It broke new ground in drawing from the operational experience of peacekeepers in the further evolution of the peacekeeping agenda.

Peacekeeping has matured. More than 80 per cent of peacekeeping resources today are devoted to operations that are more than five years old. As we launch two new missions — the first new operations in several years — we need to take stock of the situation. I would like to stress the following points.

The first is the lack of resources and the whole issue of trying simply to tell people to do more with existing or even less resources. I understand efficiency gains; I understand the need to squeeze more; but I think it needs to be clearly understood that operating on shoestring budgets and with ever-increasing mandates is certainly just not possible or effective.

Moreover, mandates need to have clarity. The Force Commander from my country, India, noted ambiguity in mandates and how it translates into people lower down the command chain really not knowing what is expected of them. I think we in the Council owe it to ourselves and the forces that we deploy on the ground to be clear in that respect and to understand that mandates and resources need to be married and in synergy. In that context, it is particularly important that the process of interacting with troop-contributing countries, which has already been begun, should be carried out in a much more intensive manner in which we have much greater clarity on what can actually be produced and done with the kind of resources that are being placed at the disposal of the force that we are creating.

I would also like to highlight one other very important element — the willingness to work in partnerships. Here, let me draw members' attention to Africa. Two-thirds of the Council's meetings and outcomes concern Africa. It is also central to United Nations peacekeeping. India strongly supports the development of greater African Union capacities in peacekeeping. In this connection, I would like to quote from the address of our Prime Minister at the second India-Africa Forum summit in Addis Ababa in May. He said:

> "India has consistently supported the development of African capacities. As a token of our commitment to supporting Africa's endeavours for seeking African solutions, I am happy to announce that India will contribute $2 million for the African Union Mission in Somalia."

Similar assistance needs to be provided by other Member States to build the African Union's capacity in peacekeeping. India is also committed to the early operationalization of the African Standby Force through special training arrangements.

We know that the weakest suffer the most in conflict. Women and children have suffered and continue to suffer appallingly in conflicts around the world. The international community has not just the responsibility but the obligation to do its utmost to ensure the security of women and children, particularly in conflict and post-conflict situations. Indian troops and police officers, which include the first fully female units deployed under the United Nations flag, will do their utmost to protect the vulnerable in their areas of operation.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Force Commanders and the men and women under their command. It is they who turn the Council's words into deeds. I would also like to pay tribute to those peacekeepers who have made the supreme sacrifice when serving the United Nations in its efforts to create a better and safer world.

Mrs. DiCarlo (United States of America): I thank you, Sir, and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) for arranging this meeting for the Council today. I, too, would like to express appreciation to Under-Secretary-General Le Roy for his excellent leadership of the DPKO during a very difficult and challenging period. We wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

I would like to thank the Force Commanders for their statements today. We very much appreciate the role that they play every day in peacekeeping operations. I want to take this opportunity to express to

Major General Asarta Cuevas and my French colleagues the United States sympathy for the injuries suffered yesterday by French peacekeeping troops in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), and our hope that they will recover fully and quickly. This is, of course, an all-too-clear example of the risks that brave peacekeepers face daily as they fulfil their roles.

To the Force Commanders, I just want to say that we very much welcome this opportunity to hear from them first-hand about the challenges and risks that they face in implementing United Nations mission mandates. The Council seeks to match mission mandates with the needed leadership and capacity to implement them successfully.

We are very much interested in understanding the operational, logistical and leadership issues that Force Commanders face. The core of every peacekeeping mission is its people and their ability to support efforts to build a more stable peace. We are interested in the operational steps being taken to develop mission-wide strategies to protect civilians, including from sexual violence, and the role for uniformed peacekeepers as part of the mission. We very much welcome discussion of the innovative measures, such as firewood patrols, community liaison assistance, issuance of cell phones to community leaders, and response and investigative teams that include a mix of civilian, police and military expertise.

Just as important are the gaps that Commanders face — the factors that either expand or constrain logistical or leadership effectiveness in achieving their mandates. These might be the tools to support missions, such as doctrine, pre-deployment or in-mission training; tools to help missions operate efficiently, such as early-warning capacity, intelligence and timely analysis; or tools to facilitate mobility, such as aviation capacity and budgetary and administrative issues.

I have a few questions for the Generals.

I would like to hear General Asarta Cuevas speak about the military arsenal of Hizbullah. The report of the Secretary-General of 1 July (S/2011/406) notes that Hizbullah still maintains its own substantial, growing and destabilizing military arsenal. I am wondering what steps UNIFIL is taking to assist the Lebanese armed forces in removing those illegal weapons and armed personnel south of the Litani River.

I very much appreciate General Nyamvumba's focus on the robust presence of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) in his remarks. We express the hope that the lessons that UNAMID has learned in establishing such a robust presence could be shared with other missions. I would like to hear him comment on that.

We remain very concerned about the severe capacity gap in aviation assets faced by the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and I would like to hear General Prakash address the question of whether — or rather how — that gap is affecting the Mission's ability to implement its mandate as outlined in resolution 1991 (2011). What are the trade-offs with the Mission's tasks, and what is the Mission no longer able to do?

Finally, I would like to hear from General Khalid about inter-mission cooperation. There has been good inter-mission cooperation between the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire and the United Nations Mission in Liberia, and I wonder what lessons have been learned from that cooperation and whether he sees a possibility to put inter-mission cooperation to use elsewhere.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish to thank Under-Secretary-General Le Roy for his presence at today's meeting. I have listened attentively to the statements made by the four Force Commanders of United Nations peacekeeping operations. I wish to express my warm welcome to all the Force Commanders present here at today's meeting. They are working under extreme difficulties all across the world, implementing the Council's mandates and making contributions to world peace and security. The Chinese delegation pays tribute to them and to all peacekeepers all across the world.

For over 60 years United Nations peacekeeping operations have been making great contributions to maintaining world peace and security. In recent years, with the changing environment, peacekeeping operations are also faced with a series of new challenges.

I do not have questions to raise at this time, but I have listened to the statements of the Force Commanders, and I want to make some comments on principle. I wish to emphasize the following four points.

First, we must strengthen coordination between peacekeeping and peacemaking. As important as peacekeeping is, it is not a panacea. To establish lasting peace, the key is to promote political dialogue and reconciliation. The Secretary-General and his Special Representatives can play a greater role in this regard in mediation.

Secondly, it is important to strengthen coordination and coherence between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The parties concerned should pay attention to and tackle the root causes of conflicts, in particular economic and social development. A holistic approach must be taken in considering the relationship between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and the division of labour between peacekeeping and peacebuilding must be clearly defined. Timely formulation and gradual improvement of an exit strategy are very important.

Thirdly, we must effectively implement the mandate to protect civilians. The host countries must bear primary responsibility for protecting civilians. Peacekeeping operations, while implementing the mandate of protecting civilians, should abide strictly by the Council's resolutions and follow the principle of impartiality, so as not to become a party to the conflict. At the same time, they should respect the sovereignty of the host country, so as to do more to promote political and national reconciliation.

Fourthly, we must also strengthen the capacity-building function of peacekeeping operations. We hope that the countries with the resources and the technical capacity to do so will increase their input so as to provide the necessary resources and technical guarantees for peacekeeping operations. We support United Nations efforts to improve the speed and efficiency of deployment of peacekeeping operations and make them more targeted and flexible and to strengthen coordination and partnership with host countries and regional organizations.

Ms. Ziade (Lebanon): At the outset, we would like to express our appreciation to you, Sir, for organizing this important debate. We also wish to thank Under-Secretary-General Le Roy for his laudable work at the helm of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and to the Force Commanders of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) for their comprehensive presentations.

Lebanon believes that United Nations peacekeeping operations require a partnership among the Security Council, the Secretariat, troop-contributing countries and host countries. After paying careful attention to the presentations of the Force Commanders, we would like to salute their dedication and service for peace. This direct interaction avails us the opportunity to understand the urgent needs from the field and in turn helps the Council to better respond to those needs.

I have two questions. One is similar to that asked by the delegation of the United States concerning cooperation between MONUSCO and UNAMID. Perhaps General Nyamvumba could give us his thoughts about the major logistical challenges facing UNAMID.

In our region, the Middle East, an end to the Israeli occupation in Palestine, Syria and the remaining parts of Lebanon — the root cause of the conflict — is a prerequisite for any comprehensive resolution and successful exit of United Nations peacekeeping missions.

Everyone has referred to what happened yesterday in the south of Lebanon. When a peacekeeping mission is tested and peacekeepers attacked, only solidarity and determination remain key for putting an end to any kind of recurrence. In this context Lebanon expressed its unequivocal condemnation of the attack. Suffice it to mention here that the President of the Republic of Lebanon, General Michel Sleiman, made a statement in which he condemned the attack and urged authorities "to multiply efforts to uncover the perpetrators and punish them".

He said that in Beirut, and here in New York my delegation associated itself with the press statement issued by the Security Council to condemn the attack (SC/10341). My delegation expresses sincere sympathy to the injured peacekeepers and their families, and we are confident that General Asarta Cuevas will convey our deep appreciation to the men and women working in UNIFIL.

Almost five years after the adoption of resolution 1701 (2006), the Government of Lebanon is strongly committed to the implementation of that resolution in its entirety. We call on the international community to put an end to Israeli violations of our sovereignty by land, air and sea. In his most recent report (S/2011/406), the Secretary-General refers to those violations and calls for their immediate cessation, since they undermine not only the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006), but also the work and credibility of UNIFIL and the authority of the Lebanese Armed Forces.

Only two days after the vote of confidence in the new Government, the Prime Minister of Lebanon visited southern Lebanon and UNIFIL headquarters. During that visit, he acknowledged the important role that UNIFIL is playing in the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006). In that regard, we sent a letter two days ago requesting a renewal of UNIFIL's mandate with no amendments.

When Major General Asarta Cuevas spoke about strategic dialogue and cooperation, he referred to the consultations that took place last week. Let me reiterate before the Council what my delegation had to say regarding this. The Lebanese army is fully engaged in a strategic dialogue with UNIFIL. Lebanon commends the efforts and sacrifices of the UNIFIL forces operating in South Lebanon, and expresses its appreciation to all contributing countries. It attaches great importance to strengthening coordination and cooperation with UNIFIL, in accordance with the agreed rules of engagement, in order to ensure proper implementation of the mission entrusted to it. Assistance in building up the capabilities of the Lebanese Armed Forces is necessary. A stronger Lebanese army would enable the Lebanese Government to continue to extend its authority over its territory.

I should like to ask Major General Asarta Cuevas a question. What, in his opinion, would be the best way to prevent disproportionate use of force by Israel along the Blue Line, similar to what happened on 15 May, when civilian demonstrators were shot at, despite the fact that they had not crossed the Blue Line?

The President: I suggest we interrupt the list of speakers and turn to the Force Commanders. I call first on Lieutenant General Prakash.

Lieutenant General Prakash: Of the two questions asked of me, the first, from the representative of Gabon, concerned my assessment of the threat of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in the region, and what cooperation can happen between the interregional missions to neutralize it.

The threat of the LRA in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is real. While its numbers are not large, the threat cannot be wished away. On average, we get reports of about 15 to 20 incidents of LRA activity every month. Over a period of time, the brutality of the attacks has lessened, the number of killings has fallen, and the number of civilians being abducted has also been greatly reduced. This reduction in the LRA's activity can, to a great extent, be attributed to a number of proactive operations that the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) has been undertaking in the area.

That said, I would reiterate that the threat is real and cannot be wished away. The fact is that the terrain is rugged, the numbers they operate in are small, the areas where they operate are inaccessible, and the borders are porous. We have established a joint intelligence operations centre in Dungu that became operational this year and is a step towards sharing information between the partners: the Uganda People's Defence Force, the Forces armées de la République Démocratique du Congo and our mission, MONUSCO. Also, in May, we had an inter-mission force commanders' conference in Entebbe where we shared information about the LRA. That said, this is not enough, and there is more scope for sharing information and conducting more effective operations against the LRA, provided we are given the right kind of resources to do it.

The second question was about the existing capability gap in our aviation assets and how it affects the Mission. The non-availability of aviation assets — both utility and attack helicopters — is of great concern for the Mission. As the years have gone by, the negative activity has shifted west, away from the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and more towards the jungles, to areas that are accessible only by helicopter. The Council is well aware of the fact that there is no road infrastructure in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Today, of 93 bases that we have in the country, 31 are air-supported; that is, one-third of the temporary operating bases/company operating

bases are in areas that can be logistically supplied only by air assets. If we do not get the right kind of air assets to support those bases, not only will we not be in a position to establish more bases that are required in inaccessible areas, but we will find it difficult to support even the existing 31 bases.

The fact that since 4 July we have had no attack helicopters has greatly reduced our deterrence capability against the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda in the Kivus. We have no capability for undertaking any proactive actions against the armed groups in the Kivus. Since the elections are approaching, we also feel that future requirements for air assets are going to be much higher. There will be conflict between meeting the requirements for protecting civilians and for transporting electoral material. That is when we will be totally stretched, and I feel at this stage that our ability to do our basic task of protecting civilians will also be highly constrained.

The President: Let me remind the Council of the lateness of the hour. Military people are known for being succinct and to the point; I do not know if the same can be said of us diplomats. I would appeal to the Council to make the best use of the time available to us, and to limit all our statements. We have another seven Council members left to speak, and we should limit our statements to what is absolutely necessary for the remaining time.

Let me now turn to Major General Asarta Cuevas.

Major General Asarta Cuevas (*spoke in Spanish*): Please allow me to answer the questions in my own language, Spanish, so that I can respond more precisely.

Concerning the so-called Hizbullah arsenal, in the mandate in resolution 1701 (2006), the primary responsibility to ensure that there are no weapons other than those belonging to the Lebanese Armed Forces and UNIFIL falls to the Government of Lebanon and the Lebanese Armed Forces. Under our mandate, under resolution 1701 (2006), the primary responsibility for ensuring that there is no type of weapon other than those of the Lebanese Armed Forces and UNIFIL in UNIFIL's area of operation falls on the Government of Lebanon and the Lebanese Armed Forces. Under our mandate, UNIFIL cannot go into private homes or onto private property unless there is credible evidence and an immediate threat relating to a violation of resolution 1701 (2006).

Our troops which are deployed in southern Lebanon, between the Litani river and the Blue Line, consist of about 12,500 soldiers and more than 1,000 civilians. Those soldiers, who are from 35 different countries, are involved in between 10,000 to 12,000 operational activities a month. During those operational activities, we have discovered, in the five years since the adoption of resolution 1701 (2006), stores of ammunition, bunkers and weapons, but all of that predates the conflict — the 2006 war. To date also, taking into account the fact that we cannot go onto private property or search homes — that is an obligation of the Lebanese Government and the Lebanese Armed Forces — there has been no evidence of the illegal trafficking of weapons. What I mean by that is that neither I personally nor any of my soldiers have seen the arsenals that have been referred to. We would like to see them to determine if they do in fact exist.

I should like to say also that the most recent launching of rockets from our area of operations against Israel took place in October 2009, so for almost two years now, thanks to the efforts of the population of the south, the Lebanese Armed Forces and UNIFIL, the cessation of hostilities has been maintained and there have been no rocket launchings against Israel.

Turning to the second question, which was asked by the representative of Lebanon, I should like to refer to the recommendations that UNIFIL made to the parties following the tragic incidents that took place on 15 May, Nakba Day, this year. Those recommendations included the fact that only the Lebanese authorities are responsible for law and order within Lebanon, and that they had to take the measures necessary to prevent incidents along the Blue Line, which, as is well known, is a very sensitive area, where most incidents take place; it has been the line of withdrawal of the Israeli forces since the war of 2000. Therefore, to prevent such incidents from occurring, what is necessary is comprehensive oversight of the population.

Also in our recommendations, which I will read word for word, we said that the Israeli forces should refrain from responding in such situations, unless it is clearly required for their own immediate self-defence, taking into account the fact that both countries, Lebanon and Israel, have the right to self-defence. But the Israel Defense Forces must not resort to the excessive use of force and must always take action that is commensurate with the offence, and therefore they

should also include equipment, units and experts for controlling demonstrators and for crowd control.

We also said that both countries — Israel and Lebanon — should ensure that in these types of situations, they use troops that are properly trained and equipped to try to prevent this type of incident from occurring. In the tripartite meetings and in the meetings I have with the parties, I always say the same thing:

(*spoke in English*)

Do not give, do not take.

(*spoke in Spanish*)

Do not provoke, and do not react to any provocation. That is the best way of avoiding incidents along the Blue Line.

I think that I have answered the questions, but if further clarifications are required, I would be happy to provide them.

The President: I now give the floor to Lieutenant-General Nyamvumba, to whom two questions were also addressed.

Lieutenant-General Nyamvumba: Two questions were posed to me, one by the representative of the United States and the other by the representative of Lebanon.

The United States question was whether we could share our experience with other missions. Indeed, that is very relevant, and part of the purpose of our gathering here in New York is, among others, to share our experiences from different missions. But besides that, we also have a forum, particularly what we refer to as inter-mission cooperation. I express my appreciation to General Prakash, who hosted our regional Force Commanders' meeting in Entebbe in May. We will take note of this and will continue to share our experiences with other missions, particularly those that have a protection of civilians mandate. We also welcome other experiences from other missions.

On the issue of the major logistical challenges facing the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), I did outline some of them, but, to be more specific, one is the long supply lines. All present are aware that the major seaport is in Port Sudan, which is about 2,000 kilometres from Darfur, with little or no infrastructure. In terms of our operations, the biggest hurdle is the lack of infrastructure on the ground. During the rainy season, as I said earlier, our patrols and our activities actually drop drastically because of the inaccessibility of areas. Even as I speak, we have dropped from 160 daily patrols to about 100 because of the impassability of roads.

Finally, there is the issue of aviation capacity. There is still a very big gap with regard to utility helicopters. I will take this opportunity to appeal to those that have the means to support the mission to make some of those capacities available, because, indeed, they go a long way towards enhancing the capabilities of the mission.

The President: I now give the floor to Major-General Khalid.

Major-General Khalid: Questions were asked of me by the representatives of the United States and Lebanon. I think that inter-mission cooperation is of paramount importance. I say so because the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has no reserve, and with the number of missions across the globe, they do not have enough forces to deal with every unforeseen eventuality.

Let me tell the House that I am going to speak to the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34) tomorrow on the same topic, which has been given to me by DPKO, and I will be touching in detail upon that issue in my speech tomorrow.

But just to reply in brief with respect to the lessons learned: we sent an infantry battalion and Mi-8 helicopters to the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) in November. The infantry battalion came back in January, the utility helicopters came back in June; the gunship helicopters were sent in March and are still there. I am glad to tell you that both UNOCI and the United Nations Mission in Liberia are making use of those Mi-24 gunships for joint tasking and joint border patrolling.

Turning to lessons learned, they come, in effect, under four major headings, or concerns: legality, logistics, military capabilities and coordination. I will touch on each of these very briefly.

By legality, I mean saving time at the last minute regarding the apprehensions of the troop-contributing countries. This should form part of the memoranda of understanding.

Turning to logistics, missions should cater for, coordinate and perhaps even at times deal with dumping of rations or fuel prior to the launching of missions so that incoming troops do not face any problems. At the level of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations at United Nations Headquarters, a comprehensive strategy must be applied — and I am sure this is the case. It must be reviewed periodically in consultation with all missions which have been tasked with inter-mission cooperation. There may not be a giant border in all cases of inter-mission cooperation, and road conditions may not be good or there may not be any roads at all, so this must be catered for by land, air and sea so as to avoid any unnecessary delays at the last minute, which is normally a critical stage. The logistics must be clearly defined.

For better coordination, all such missions must have inter-mission coordination cells, which should maintain contact with a view to achieving better coordination and remaining up to date with the latest developments.

Last but not least, in cases where different languages are spoken in the missions and countries concerned, a team of interpreters must be present to ensure that forces encounter no problems upon arrival and that they are put to effective use.

The President: I will now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Mr. Sangqu (South Africa): I thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Alain Le Roy, the head of the Office of Military Affairs, Lieutenant General Babacar Gaye, and the Force Commanders for their informative statements this morning.

We welcome the Force Commanders who have joined us today in the Council. New York is indeed far from the battlefield, so the opportunity to hear firsthand from the military leadership from the field is indeed valuable. We see merit in convening such engagements on a regular basis, and we thank the German delegation for this initiative.

The Security Council has stated clearly in the past — and South Africa fully endorses this view — that United Nations peacekeeping operations are deployed only as an accompaniment and not as an alternative to political strategies for the resolution of conflicts.

Over the years, peacekeeping has become a complex and multifaceted undertaking due to the changing nature of conflicts. We are mindful of the compounding effects and challenges prevailing in the era of intra-State conflicts. In most cases, belligerents are increasingly well resourced and equipped, often wield great influence and do not conform to the rules of engagement. No longer are conflict-affected areas only failed States; they possess strong military capacities and robust political leadership.

In response to these challenges, the United Nations has to act with the necessary dynamism and agility. It is therefore critical, for us in the Council and the United Nations political and military leadership on the ground, to be continuously concerned with mobilizing and maintaining the political support of all stakeholders, especially of those nations in which the Council mandates peacekeeping missions, and to respect the sovereignty of all States.

The Council also has a particularly important role throughout a mission's lifespan to support efforts to improve cooperation and coordination with regional and subregional organizations and other partners. The Security Council's responses to the crises on the African continent are a constant reminder of the ongoing need for greater cooperation and coordination with regional organizations, especially the African Union. Nothing will replace African leadership and solutions for African problems.

Today we should reflect on, inter alia, our ability to optimally leverage the security umbrella provided by peacekeeping operations in the field and to find political solutions to conflicts. The Council should adopt coherent, comprehensive strategies that effectively translate the mandates of peacekeeping operations into clear, credible and achievable outcomes. We should reflect on ensuring that operations are sufficiently matched with appropriate resources and that they are adequately prepared and deployed in a timely manner at the desired operational strength and capacity. We should make sure that the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for peacekeeping operations are adequate and that the Council is sufficiently aware of the resource and field support implications of its decisions.

These are just some of the important issues that could help our collective efforts to understand the challenges that we face at a military level across the spectrum of peacekeeping operations. We believe that by collectively addressing these issues we will make a significant contribution to improving the overall performance of United Nations peacekeeping.

Protecting the lives of ordinary civilians, who are all too often the innocent victims of instability and strife in conflict zones, is paramount. International law provides that the primary responsibility to protect civilians rests with the States. The protection of civilians is by its nature politically very sensitive, yet it is a critical and vital mandated task. Given the nature of recent conflicts, the protection of civilians becomes a necessity, and the role of regional organizations and the international community is even more important.

We are encouraged by ongoing efforts to address the shortage of military assets such as helicopters. We cannot afford to deploy troops in foreign territories and then expect them to be everywhere at once without the necessary resources or, in some cases, when not operating at full strength. We owe it to our troops on the ground to ensure that they receive the desired level of support.

However, we must always emphasize the importance of United Nations peacekeeping operations always acting in accordance with the principles of impartiality, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and in accordance with international law and human rights law.

In conclusion, my delegation pays tribute to all the men and women in uniform who have served and who continue to serve in United Nations peacekeeping operations, and we commend their dedication and courage. We pay special tribute to those who have paid the ultimate price in the service of peace and humanity.

Mr. Bonne (France) (*spoke in French*): I too wish to thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this meeting, which has become a regular feature, as it provides a rare but valuable opportunity to exchange with the force commanders and to hear the views from the field.

I thank the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Force Commanders of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), the United Nations-African Union Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) for their briefings.

First, I would like to recall France's commitment to peacekeeping, which is one of the most important and certainly most symbolic activities of the United Nations. Here I would like first of all to commend the exceptional work carried out by the Blue Helmets on the ground in often difficult and dangerous conditions, where no one else goes, in order to implement mandates whose complexity directly reflects that of the crises that our Organization seeks to tackle.

France wishes to continue participating in efforts to improve the functioning of peacekeeping operations. Since their inception, these operations have been the privileged instrument through which the Council exercises its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Improving the effectiveness of such operations is thus a matter of strategic importance.

In following up the 2009 initiative by France and the United Kingdom, our goal remains to improve the political and military monitoring of operations by the Security Council, to ensure greater effectiveness in the logistical and financial management of operations, to clarify doctrine with regard to a number of complex issues such as the protection of civilians, and to clarify, and rationalize as far as possible, mandates, as necessary. That is the purpose of the regular consultations that the Council now holds on cross-cutting issues concerning peacekeeping. We believe that they should continue.

With regard to all of the issues I just raised, we believe that we have made progress. We welcome in particular the implementation of the global field support strategy. We would also like to welcome the Senior Advisory Group's report on strengthening civilian capacity in post-conflict situations (S/2011/85). We believe that it will make it possible to amend the way that peacekeeping operations function in terms of such important issues as the economic impact of operations on national development and the role of women in peacekeeping.

We will therefore continue our work, especially in the area of strengthening the chain of command in peacekeeping operations, improving cooperation with troop contributors and providing for more rigorous

financial follow-up in support of peacekeeping. I note that the budget for peacekeeping operations has soared in recent years. It is true that the needs played a big role in this, but it is also true that in a tight budgetary climate for financial contributors, it is essential that we have the means to manage the budget in a responsible and controlled manner.

I, too, have some questions to ask the Force Commanders present here today. First, I have a general question. Are the reform efforts undertaken in New York felt in the field? Do the practices on the ground change as a result of decisions taken or recommendations made in the Council? How can we in the Council better take into account the views from the field and the feedback from Force Commanders?

More specifically, I have questions for Major General Asarta Cuevas on UNIFIL. We, too, firmly condemn, of course, the attacks on UNIFIL troops. We appreciate the solidarity expressed after yesterday's attack, in which our soldiers were victims. Of course, we will not tolerate the security and safety of military and civilian staff deployed in Lebanon being furthered threatened. We understand the difficulty of the task at hand, but what can we do to ensure that the soldiers in the field are better protected? Also, how can we enhance cooperation with the Lebanese Armed Forces? And how can we ensure that the tasks currently carried out by UNIFIL are progressively handed over?

My question for the Force Commander of MONUSCO concerns the adaptation of the civilian protection strategy in the current context of preparing for elections. In this pre-electoral climate, is there any need to change the force's approach and its civilian protection strategy, given the constraints that we have been advised of?

Mr. Barbalić (Bosnia and Herzegovina): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Sir, for organizing this briefing. We thank the Under-Secretary-General for his comments and the Force Commanders of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, the United Nations Mission in Liberia, the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo for their insightful remarks. We also welcome the presence of the other Force Commanders of the United Nations peacekeeping operations and praise their commitments and efforts, as well as the outstanding work of all the personnel in peacekeeping missions.

One of the key recurring issues in discussions on peacekeeping has been the need for the Council to provide peacekeeping missions with clear, credible and achievable mandates matched by adequate resources in order to fulfil their mandated tasks. Bringing timely and relevant information to the Council is therefore indispensable for decision-making. To that end, we emphasize that each resolution needs to be clearly and accurately reflected in the concept of operations during its implementation.

Starting at the beginning of the year, significant documents on the interrelation between peacekeeping and peacebuilding and between security and development have been released. Discussions on these issues must identify a practical way forward for the main challenges and obstacles and offer solutions for capacity-development, coordination and field guidance.

The growing complexity of tasks entrusted to peacekeeping missions and the scarcity of specific resources, in particular civilian support capacities, can place the success of a mission at risk. Bosnia and Herzegovina welcomes activities related to the review of the international civilian capacities. We believe that ongoing activities with regard to the recommendations of and discussions on this study will lead towards concrete improvements and practical and feasible proposals in this area. Moreover, cooperation between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support should bring about viable solutions, positive changes and tangible results on the ground.

In this regard, we underline the importance of cooperation, consultation and exchange of views with troop- and police-contributing countries. Mobilizing Member States' support is essential for dealing with a capability-driven approach that concentrates on skills, equipment and capacity.

It is evident that missions with protection mandates include diverse activities aimed at ensuring the safety and physical protection of civilian populations. Information-gathering, timely and accurate data about the local situation and circumstances, and their analysis are crucial. Nevertheless, missions should have appropriate resources to analyse those data and to assist in restoring an environment in which the host State is able

to exercise its primary responsibility to protect its citizens. This aspect certainly includes other processes — such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, security sector reform, supporting electoral processes and the empowerment of local communities — in order to facilitate the transition to sustainable peacebuilding.

The need to implement an effective exit strategy must be coordinated with the quality of personnel and equipment and linked to corresponding operational mandates and objectives. The cultural sensitivities of the area of deployment should also be taken into account in order to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings between a mission and the host country and its communities.

This year we have witnessed the authorization of two new missions: the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei and the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan. Bosnia and Herzegovina is of the view that the Organization needs to perform to the best of its ability to apply its know-how and the lessons learned from previous peacekeeping missions, while the Council must provide the missions with the strategic guidance and adequate support they need. In that regard, the Mission in South Sudan has to contribute to improving governance capacity and the rule of law.

The mandate is undoubtedly of vital importance in providing guidance for the future reconfiguration of a mission. Developments on the ground must be taken into account, making the mandate of a mission more realistic and attainable.

Finally, we emphasize that a peacekeeping mission is part of the political solution to conflict, but that it cannot be a substitute for the solution. Therefore, activities on the ground must be strengthened, together with efforts on preventive diplomacy, early warning or conflict mediation, and focused on national priorities and national actors. Paying attention to those aspects needs to be an integral part of each peacekeeping mission in order to avoid the recurrence of conflict, contribute to a country's development and lasting peace and, above all, guarantee international security.

Mr. Tatham (United Kingdom): I will try to be very brief. I thank Ambassador Wittig for inviting Under-Secretary-General Le Roy and the Force Commanders from the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to brief the Council. I would like to thank them for their insights this morning, and more importantly for the work of the Force Commanders and police commissioners and the hard work of all the women and men who are under their command, frequently, as we know, in very challenging circumstances and at great personal risk. These risks were highlighted by the recent attacks on UNIFIL. I join others in condemning the attack earlier this week and in wishing a speedy recovery to those who were injured.

The United Kingdom very much supports the ongoing initiative, which has become something of a tradition now, to ensure that force commanders and police commissioners have an opportunity to brief the Council during their annual conference in New York. It is important to ensure that we do as much as is feasible to improve the Council's understanding of the operational demands placed on troops and police by the peacekeeping resolutions we write.

As we demonstrated during our November presidency of the Council, we have access to new technology to ensure that we can hear from operational commanders more frequently, and we believe that we should take up that opportunity on a more regular basis. It will be important that we can hear in due course from the new Force Commander of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei.

In the light of what I have heard from the Force Commanders and from colleagues on the Council, I would like to make observations on four brief points.

First is the protection of civilians. I took from the presentation of General Nyamvumba a clear message about the importance of the responsibility to protect civilians under attack or threat of attack. That is fundamental to peacekeeping responsibilities. I am interested here in the linkage between that and the use of a robust posture — a concept which is well understood among UNAMID senior leadership. I am aware that for some this is a controversial issue, but I join my Nigerian colleague in expressing robust support for robust posture. I am aware that the Secretary-General has referred to UNAMID's robustness as having contributed to a reduction in

attacks on the Mission, and I think that is an important point.

Second is the impact of conditionality policy. I listened to General Prakash's remarks on conditionality with great interest. Conditionality is a requirement to ensure that peacekeepers are not supporting activities that fall outside international humanitarian law. The application of such a policy must, obviously, be rigorous.

But we have to also keep an eye on operational effectiveness. General Prakash spoke about the balance between the desirable and the feasible. I am interested in the concept of that balance — how to strike it — if there is time, but I appreciate the fact that we are running against the clock. I would be interested in General Prakash's view as to whether there are useful general principles for this balance that can be identified for wider application, or whether this is something that needs to be determined very much on the ground.

General Prakash also gave some useful guidelines about implementing conditionality, in particular that it is easier to implement at the start rather than downstream. I think that is an important consideration in the light of the new peacekeeping operation under way in Southern Sudan.

My third observation is about inter-mission cooperation, where I would briefly like to echo my Nigerian colleague once again, and my United States colleague, in expressing strong support for the principle of inter-mission cooperation. There are situations where this makes good operational sense, and the asset-sharing between UNMIL and the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) is an important example. I think the potential for this needs to be fully explored.

My final observation is on clear mandates. I think it was my Indian colleague who spoke about the importance of clear mandates. We have all referred to the risks and hardships that our peacekeeping operations have to endure. I think the least that we can do is to provide the peacekeeping missions with clear mandates. It is all too easy for us around the Council table to try and bridge differences through ambiguity or elaborate wording. We always need to be mindful of the problems this can pose to peacekeeping operations in the field as they carry out their important work.

Finally, listening to the Force Commanders this morning, I was reminded once again of the enormous value that we get from the direct view from the field. I would like to thank them very much for taking the time from their annual conference to speak to the Council. I hope we will be able to hear from them in the future on a regular basis.

Mr. Pankin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I will try to be brief, given the time constraints.

We are pleased to again welcome here the Force Commanders of the United Nations peacekeeping missions. It is heartening to see this kind of dialogue, which was initially proposed by the Russian Federation last year during its presidency of the Council, put into practice. I would like to here support my British colleague, who has enriched the practice. The Council now has the opportunity for more frequent such meetings using videoconferencing and other modern technology. Members of the Council should check our watches with those of our military colleagues to examine the current problems in the field that are truly being faced by peacekeepers, and the military challenges. This practice will ultimately ensure that the Council is provided with effective military expertise.

I will not go over the importance we attach to peacekeeping. Like many colleagues, we believe it is a truly crucial tool of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace and security. Our peacekeepers participate in many peacekeeping operations in the Middle East and various regions of Africa and in Haiti. We are aware that United Nations peacekeeping is not fixed in place. It continues to be actively needed. As has been noted, there are two new peacekeeping operations in the Abyei region and in South Sudan.

In our view, people in military uniforms, who make up two thirds of the peacekeepers, play a leading role in terms of addressing three crucial tasks: supporting efforts of national Governments to stabilize the situation and restore peace, protecting civilians, and monitoring compliance with ceasefire agreements. But United Nations peacekeeping activities continue to evolve, including from both conceptual and operational perspectives. Therefore it is important to adapt in order to deal with current problems and respond to new political realities.

Many of the speakers here today have talked about the fact that there are new challenges and what

kind of challenges there are — challenges that require joint decisions between military actors and the diplomats of the Security Council.

We therefore believe that there are several general points — for example, the unconventional situations faced by the Blue Helmets. But there are unwavering principles regarding peacekeeping. Peacekeepers must strictly abide by their mandates and avoid involvement in any political conflict or silent support to a party to a conflict. Such action could lead to extremely negative consequences and undermine the reputation of the United Nations.

Clearly, we support comments made by other colleagues that the mandates of peacekeeping operations must be clear, feasible and in keeping with the situations. Therefore, there is still a need to address the issue of ensuring the necessary level of military advice for the steps undertaken within United Nations peacekeeping.

Again we recall our proposal to revitalize the activities of the Military Staff Committee, which could elaborate recommendations on operational aspects of peacekeeping and take part in missions to assess the preparedness of contingents and infrastructure for peacekeeping operations. In turn, this would make it possible to provide the Council with up-to-date information.

Obviously, the issue of enhancing United Nations peacekeeping requires more effectively tapping into the resources of regional organizations and engaging them, since we agree that peacekeeping is an ancillary function to the primary functions of the Governments of countries, for example, engaging the forces of that State or Government.

The shortfall of financial, logistical and technical resources means that there is a need to leverage existing capacities. Therefore we believe it is important to clearly distinguish between functions in peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding. Under current peacekeeping mandates those are clearly linked, but United Nations peacekeepers should only be given the initial tasks of peacebuilding. The process of socio-economic reconstruction and related tasks must be assigned to more specialized structures of the United Nations system in areas of development, and also regional organizations with the relevant capacities.

Our hope is that this meeting will make it possible to work together on further enhancing United Nations peacekeeping operations.

Mr. Moraes Cabral (Portugal): Like others, we believe that peacekeeping and peacebuilding are truly at the crux of the United Nations today. All members know how deeply my country is committed to these tasks. We have been active in several missions during the past 30 years. We therefore thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this very timely debate. It is extremely useful to have this opportunity to interact with Force Commanders and to hear their points of view directly, so I thank the Generals for their very comprehensive presentations, which were extremely useful, as were the answers that they gave to some of the questions raised.

However, let me pay tribute and commend all the women and men who are in missions, the Force Commanders and the Police Commissioners for the way in which they carry out their tasks, often — as we have already heard today — in very difficult conditions. They deserve our constant support.

I have a couple of comments on what has been said, and I endorse much, if not everything, that has already been said, so I will be brief.

The conditionality policy can be used as a tool but, as was underlined by Lieutenant General Prakash, some caution is needed in its application. The issue for us — as he himself said — is that there is scope for development and refinement in the conditionality dimension and the positive and negative elements it entails. I fully agree with him that there is a problem if the application of the conditionality starts to have a negative impact on mission operational activities. I also thank Lieutenant General Prakash for his reference to the threat of the Lord's Resistance Army. We ourselves suggested the useful debate that we had on that last week (see S/PV.6588).

Moving on to the protection of civilians, to which we all attach the utmost importance, there has been significant improvement over the years on that very important dimension. We commend the efforts of the Secretariat and the positive progress made by missions in that area. To Lieutenant General Nyamvumba, I would say that the issue is to what extent a mission, if not mandated in that sense, should use force to protect civilians in a non-permissive environment.

My third comment is addressed to Major General Asarta Cuevas. Again like others, we condemn the attacks on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) yesterday and in May, which unfortunately took lives. We consider the situation unacceptable, and the parties should abide by United Nations resolutions and by their responsibilities. Our French colleague raised the important issue of how we can best ensure the protection of the soldiers in a very difficult situation. As the General mentioned the other day, last week we had a very useful debate on the situation in Lebanon and it is very clear that the presence of UNIFIL has had a very important and positive impact on creating a stable and calm situation, albeit still very fragile. I think that that there was broad consensus that UNIFIL's presence in the area is still an extremely important element.

As I stated during that debate — and we are very happy about it — we will shortly reinforce the Portuguese contingent within UNIFIL with 12 officers from Timor-Leste. I think that that also has a very symbolic dimension to it because Timor-Leste, being a country where there is still a United Nations mission, for its part it is already participating in other United Nations missions.

I thank Major General Khalid for his statement and his answers. I think that the issue of strong inter-mission cooperation is extremely important and can be decisive in some areas. Of course, I share his view of the role in early peacebuilding efforts in keeping law and order, allowing for people to return to their normal livelihoods and, obviously, getting a political process under way. We often say that peacekeepers are the first peacebuilders as long as there is a peace to keep and build. But I think that that is a useful way of looking at it.

Here, I conclude that — and this has been stated before — missions need the means, tools, adequate training and leadership, but, as our South African colleague stressed, there is a need for an overall political and coherent strategy in order for missions to do their job properly.

The President: Due to the lateness of the hour, I will skip my national statement. Most of it has already been covered by others. I will just make three brief remarks.

First, I thank the Force Commanders for being with us and giving us this opportunity for an exchange. I think that it will, indeed, become a tradition. Secondly, I express high appreciation of their difficult service in very demanding circumstances and, of course, through them, of the 120,000 men and women in the field. Thirdly, I would like to join others in paying tribute to Alain Le Roy. He has just left the Chamber, but he knows how highly we regard his outstanding commitment and leadership in managing the peacekeeping operations and in taking forward the challenges of adapting them to the new requirements.

Let us now turn to the questions and answers. There was one from the representative of France, I think, of an overarching nature, that is, the question of reform and how that impacts on missions on the ground. I take it that it also refers to the New Horizon agenda. Following a hint by Alain Le Roy, I would suggest that, in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, we invite Major General Obi, Force Commander of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan, and Major General Ramos Pereira, Force Commander of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, to participate in this meeting and to address those questions because we can diversify a little and give them an opportunity to respond on the reform issue.

I give the floor to Major General Ramos Pereira to answer the question on reform put by the French representative.

Major General Ramos Pereira: As the Force Commander of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, I now face the challenge of implementing the new mandate that the Security Council is seeking on reform. I would like to say that the situation in Haiti is still stable and under control. For me and my troops, it is very good to have a very clear mandate with guidance and the capacity to fulfil our mission. It is important also to mention that, as the Council is fully aware, the environment in Haiti is volatile, so it has to account for the situation there.

If there are more questions, I am available to answer them.

The President: I give the floor to Major General Obi.

Major General Obi: I am the Force Commander of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan.

I would like to say that the reforms introduced so far have had a very positive impact on our operations

in the field in a number of ways. I would like to start with the issue of the quality of troops that was raised here today. We need a very high quality of troops in the field to be able to execute our mandate.

One of the reforms deals with that subject, and to that effect infantry units are standardized in terms of personnel and equipment. That has made it easier for a force commander to appreciate what is available to him. He is able to assess what personnel are available to him and to task them appropriately.

In terms of the quality of troops, I also want to say that the introduction of pre-deployment training and pre-induction inspections of equipment has helped in ensuring that we have a higher quality of troops, which has also helped in our mandate implementation.

The aspect of integration is one of those areas that have been well emphasized in recent reforms. My Mission, the United Nations Mission in the Sudan, has been integrated, and to that extent we have been enabled to work jointly with the civilian, military and police pillars and the United Nations country team. A case in point is the protection of civilians strategy, which takes into account the fact that the protection of civilians is not just a military responsibility, but involves all. Here, we have been able to incorporate our efforts through training, the development of concepts, the sharing of information, and the creation of joint operations centres and joint movement centres. These are all developments that have been found to be very useful in the field and have greatly assisted us. During the recent crises in Kordofan and Abyei, we put them widely into practice. All pillars shared information, met very actively in crisis management teams, and were largely able, collectively, to address the challenges that faced us.

These reforms have been useful to us in the field, in addition to getting us together in meetings of force commanders — as in the case of the Entebbe meeting, which was referred to earlier — to exchange information. That is also a new development that we have found to be very useful.

The President: I call on Lieutenant General Prakash to address the questions and comments that have been made.

Lieutenant General Prakash: The question that I want to answer is whether a change of strategy is required with respect to the protection of civilians by the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) in the pre- and post-electoral periods.

My view on the subject is that the present strategy in place is working well. We have recently taken a look at it. We have worked out modalities as to how we are going operate. We have arranged various contingencies to deal with various situations that may arise. What clearly emerges is not that the strategy is not in place, but that the enablers are not in place. For example, there is a likelihood of armed groups ramping up their activities and, as the elections approach, there is likely to be more civil unrest. If such things are going to happen, we will need more enablers. The enablers need to come on time and to be in the right place at the right time. As long as the enablers are provided, I think there is no need to change strategy.

The President: I give the floor to Major General Asarta Cuevas to address the questions and comments that have been made.

Major General Asarta Cuevas (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I should like to thank all members of the Council for their kind words addressed to our French soldiers in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) who suffered a criminal terrorist attack yesterday.

The French Ambassador asked three questions. The first was about how our soldiers can be better protected. The second was about coordination with the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF). The third related to the transfer of responsibility to the LAF.

Turning to the question about how our soldiers can be better protected, I must say that UNIFIL has enough robust means and protection to achieve its missions. The protection of vehicles is a national responsibility. In this case, France, Spain and Italy have had no problem providing us with armoured vehicles. Following the attack of 27 May on an Italian patrol, in which six soldiers were wounded, I sent a directive to my soldiers containing additional security measures. The most important of those measures included the orders that convoys, where possible, should always take place at night and with jammers; that two vehicles at a minimum must always travel together; that our soldiers should wear flak jackets and helmets; and that, whenever possible, the LAF should also provide bodyguards and maintain ongoing contact with the joint operations centre.

It is important to stress that those instructions were for convoys travelling outside our area of operations, because the two terrorist attacks on us — the first in May and the other yesterday — took place outside of UNIFIL's area of operations. Similar attacks took place in 2008 in the same zone. What that means is that, in cooperation with the LAF and the population, we can control our area of operations, but outside that we do not have control. That is the national responsibility of the Lebanese Government and Armed Forces. They must guarantee security along the coastal highway, which is basically UNIFIL's only route for relief troops and supplies and to access the Beirut port and airport where our soldiers arrive at and leave the country.

Having discussed convoys, I will turn to the safety of individuals, towards which we have taken certain additional measures, including a ban on the use of marked UNIFIL vehicles for personal use outside the area of operations. However, if individuals need to leave the area of operations — to go on vacation via the airport, for instance — we have painted 14 unmarked vehicles, using various colours, that are made available to soldiers and other UNIFIL personnel for individual needs.

We have taken one additional measure that I proposed to General Kahwaji and the chief of intelligence of the LAF for the southern sector. That measure involves daily reconnaissance of the highway that connects our area of operations with the port and airport of Beirut. For us, it amounts to an extension of our area of operations, but it is not actually within that area. We therefore need to work closely with the Lebanon Government and the LAF. I have proposed daily reconnaissance of that road, at different times each day, together with the Lebanese Armed Forces and security forces, but only in sensitive areas that are highly vulnerable to attack.

I have been waiting for a response for two months. Finally last Friday, I sent a formal letter to the Commander in Chief of the Lebanese Armed Forces, proposing this initiative yet again and asking for a response. Sadly, yesterday there was another attack. I am not saying that we could have avoided it had we taken the measures I proposed, but we might have.

I also want to update the Council on what happened with the incident yesterday. There were four vehicles, three of which were armoured, while the third was not. The attack was against the fourth vehicle, which was an armoured vehicle with jammers. Of a total of 12 soldiers, six were wounded, all lightly except one who has an eye in quite bad condition, but he will not lose it. Of those, three were flown home to France today. The other three are still working in their units. We were actually lucky.

Turning to the second question about our coordination with the LAF, it is excellent in our operations area. They have officials and representatives at all levels and in every location. They are aware of our activities on a daily basis and there is complete transparency. Beyond the area of operations, at the Force Commander level we coordinate with the chief of intelligence and the Commander in Chief of the LAF. If they have information or anything important that I need to know, they communicate it right away.

Regarding the transfer of responsibilities from UNIFIL to the LAF, in keeping with the joint technical review that I mentioned earlier, we have a strategic dialogue in place with the LAF. The purpose of the dialogue is to assess UNIFIL capacity and the tasks that it must fulfil pursuant to its mandate under resolution 1701 (2006). It is also to assess LAF capacity and which of our missions it can undertake, with the ultimate goal of leaving the Lebanese Armed Forces to fulfil all the tasks conferred on UNIFIL under resolution 1701 (2006). We recognize that UNIFIL cannot be in Lebanon forever. At some point, we must withdraw. The LAF will have to assume the responsibilities currently now assumed by UNIFIL. When will that day come? We do not know, but we are working towards it.

By way of conclusion, I can say that the most recent meeting on 7 July saw the creation of four subcommittees — one for infrastructure, one for command and control, another for troop capacity and movement, and another for operational issues. All of that is geared to making headway towards being able to transfer all our responsibilities — and I underline again that this is mandated by resolution 1701 (2006) — to the Lebanese Armed Forces.

The President: We have covered a lot of ground in a few hours. This has been a very useful dialogue. I know I speak for the Council in thanking all the Force Commanders for making it possible by making themselves available. I think this should become a tradition and that we should have such an exchange at least once a year.

I thank the Force Commanders for being with us today.

The meeting rose at 2.05 p.m.